

## FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The agenda for the second session of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress is just taking shape. The completion of leadership elections in the House and the release of the President's Budget next week will kickoff activity. However, a truncated schedule and electoral pressure may make it difficult to enact major legislation in an election year.

A brief outline of federal issues the City will likely address in the coming months follows.

### Budget

- In his State of the Union Address, President Bush said his budget will call for the elimination of more than 140 programs.
- The President is likely to again propose the creation of the Strengthening America's Communities Grant, though CDBG will likely not be included in it.

### Telecommunications

- The House Energy & Commerce Committee plans to have a comprehensive telecommunications bill on the House floor by April.
- The Senate Commerce Committee is taking a slower approach and holding a series of weekly hearings through April.

### Transportation

- Congress will begin work on reauthorizing federal aviation programs and will continue to grapple with the future of intercity passenger rail.

### Eminent Domain

- Congress will likely defer action until the Government Accountability Office issues a report this summer on the use of eminent domain by local governments.

### Hurricane Relief

- Congress may provide additional funding for hurricane relief. The City will continue to pursue federal assistance to help with evacuees.